

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2099

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3970

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP, FR, PINT

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER CORTINA'S VISIT TO PARIS

1. IN REPLY TO MY QUERY CONCERNING CORTINA'S VISIT TO PARIS TOWARD THE END OF JUNE, FOREIGN OFFICE UNDER SECRETARY ROVIRA TOLD ME JUNE 9 THAT THIS VISIT HAD BEEN ARRANGED AT FRANCE'S INVITATION SHORTLY AFTER GENSCHER'S VISIT TO MADRID IN APRIL. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED, BUT ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT ONES MIGHT HAVE TO DO WITH THE DISSATISFACTION BOTH IN MADRID AND IN PARIS WITH REGARD TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BASQUE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION (ETA). ON THE SPANISH SIDE, IT WAS BELIEVED THAT THE FRENCH WERE EXTREMELY LAX IN THE BORDER CONTROLS AND IN NOT PREVENTING BASQUE TERRORISTS FROM USING FRANCE AS A HAVEN. ON THE FRENCH SIDE, THERE WAS A BELIEF, RECENTLY EXPRESSED BY THE FRENCH INTERIOR MINISTER, THAT SOME OF THE ATTACKS AGAINST BASQUE SYMPATHIZERS IN FRANCE HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT "UNOFFICIALLY" BY SPANISH POLICE.

2. ROVIRA WAS NOT SURE HOW THE VISIT WOULD GO SINCE HE GAVE ME TO UNDERSTAND THAT CORTINA DID NOT HAVE THE HIGHEST REGARD FOR THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SPANISH-FRENCH RELATIONS CONTINUE TO BE QUITE GOOD ON THE MILITARY LEVEL, THE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP
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IS AT BEST UNEASY, PARTICULARLY OVER THE BASQUE PROBLEM.

CORTINA HAS A CERTAIN SYMPATHY FOR FRANCE HAVING BEEN AMBASSADOR
THERE, AND HE BELIEVES THAT THE FRENCH WILL BASICALLY BE HELPFUL
TO SPAIN IN TERMS OF SPAIN'S ROLE IN WESTERN DEFENSE EFFORTS.
IT IS MOSTLY IN THE LATTER CONTEXT THAT CORTINA IS PAYING HIS
VISIT IN ORDER TO KEEP THIS LINE OF APPROACH OPEN.
STABLER

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